

THE HOME

looking as if the death-angel had already claimed him. Then the muscles relaxed, and he moaned piteously—

"O mother! mother! Why did you go away? What shall I do?"

This was the first time that Anna had heard the word mother pronounced by any of the members of this family when it had not filled her heart with agony.

"Paul, what does mamma do for you?" she inquired, bending over the sufferer.

"You here!" whispered Paul, so surprised

"Don't be frightened, Anna; it will be over presently."

"Yes Paul," said Anna, with an earnestness which surprised even herself; "but what does mamma do?"

"Everything, everything," replied Paul, struggling manfully with another spasm; but it was too much for him; and then

"Thank you," said Paul, whimsically.

"Very—very often," was the shuddering reply. "And you relieved me almost as quickly as—as your mother."

"Why didn't you say mother, as you started to?" inquired Anna.

"I never got to say it because I think I

more, suggested Anna, still bathing his head.

"Think of this, please," replied Paul. "I am so weak and ill that it is not unlikely I shall!"

"Yes, yes, Paul, I know," interrupted Anna, with a shiver.

"And if I know when 'would be' continued Paul, "there is one thing that would be better than 'might be'—I shall!"

"I know what that is, Paul," said Anna. "I know very well."

And Anna's heart went on, "sometimes I think I shall get over these spasms. They are not half so bad as they were before your mother came."

"Thank you, dear, please. Say nothing. It will be because of the care I have had; and I shall be well. I shall go so much faster for having had her!"

Anna drew the heavy dark hallway from the invalid's embers, but spoke no word.

"I have been," she continued Paul, "getting so wild and careless—beyond the word. I am afraid, at least as a boy could go, and as a girl should go. And I have done nothing to teach her. And I have done nothing to teach her and keep

her straight, and then think of father. Never saw such happy faces as his is not. And so the change has been brought about by our mother," said Anna, apparently more to herself than to the others. "And so," said Anna. "And yet," Paul was determined to say it all now—"I wish from the bottom of my heart that you would not look so happy. I am happy, with my own child—whom of course she loves better than all the rest of us put together—so miserable. As father said to me, 'I am here, all the pleasure and benefit ours.'"

"I hear mamma's voice," said Anna, "and I am sure she is right. I don't want to think of what you have said, and I hope you won't feel any worse for having talked to me."

Paul held out his hand, and Anna took it for a moment in both of hers. No other words were spoken. Paul's face showed his happiness as the girl passed out of the room.

That evening the invalid was well enough to be wheeled into the dining-room, and

"Why 'rhy? why 'rhy?" exclaimed Mr. Demer. But, shaking his head for his father to stop, and Anna began, "I want to take back, if you will let me, all mamma said this morn'g as coming from me. I am quite willing to accept Christmas presents, and hope it ain't too late for me to make some. It seems to me I must have been crazy till this morn'g, and I don't want to go on or to think of his forehead—" brought me to my senses. I didn't want to share my mother with anybody else, but I am willing now, and more than that, I am very much ashamed of myself."

"Be jingo, Anna! that's just lovely!" said Frank, waking up to the girl and giving her a rousing kiss.

"Happy Christmas and a happy New Year!" said Mr. Demer, following his sons

example. "Now, Anna, we shall see what this repentance is good for," continued the good mother, "and shall insist upon your calling me father, this minute."

"Father!" said Anna, as she ran into her mother's arms, and bowed her tearful face in the old-time refuge. Then mother and daughter joined hands and cried together till Mr. Demer declared he was too weak to wait another minute.

And the reader may imagine that Christmas was enjoyed by the family as few such days are enjoyed.

"Whatever is Best, is Best."

I know, as my life grows older,
And mine eyes have clearer sight—
That under each and every shadow,
Somewhere, somewhere,
Here lies the root of right.
That each sorrow has its purpose,
And the sorrow will be eased,
But as sure as the sun bring morning,
Whatever is, is best.

I know that each sinful action,
As sure as the world begins a day,
Is something cowardly and mean,
And that the best of all ways

I 'tho' the hour be long delayed
I know that the soul is aye
Sometimes by the house of sinners,
And to grow means often to suffer—
But whatever is, is best.

I know there are no errors
In the great Eternal plan,
And all things work together
For the final good of man
And I know when my soul speeds onward
In the grand, Eternal, Future,
I shall say, as I look back on earthward,
"Whatever I, is best!"
— Ellen Wheeler Wilcox.

A Slight Mistake.
(Oswego Palladium.)

An amusing incident took place the other night at a house in the Fifth Ward, where a woman lay dead. At a late hour three young men who had known the deceased went to the place where the body lay for the purpose of attending the funeral. They entered the front door quietly and passed into the front room, where several women were carrying

on a conversation in a low tone of voice. The excellent qualities of the deceased were dwelt upon, and it was said that he bowed down under the great affliction. A woman in the room lay the form of a woman. Three young men crossed the floor softly. Knell beside the sofa and uttered fervent prayers for the repose of the spirit of the departed. The women in the room ceased talking when the young men knelt down, apparently awed by the solemnity of the occasion.

The prayers were finally concluded, and the young men rose to their feet. In rising the skirt of one young man's coat touched the face of the form on the sofa. Instantly her eyes opened wide and she raised herself as if to speak. The young man, the young men can best be imagined than described. Their hair stood on end and their eyes bulged.

out, but they did not move. Suddenly one of the number gave vent to a piercing yell, and ran from the house closely followed by his companions. The corpse was in the next room, and the person over whom they had been praying was a relative of the de-

and been playing was a relative of the deceased who had laid down for a short rest.